

Section II — 1997 Accountability System

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)

Information used to rate and acknowledge districts and schools, or to provide a more comprehensive profile of characteristics and performance is compiled into the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). This is a comprehensive system; both performance and profile information is available for all districts and schools. Profile information is report-only. Three types of performance indicators are used in the system:

Base Indicators are identified in statute and used to determine accountability ratings.

Additional Indicators are used to acknowledge high performance on other statutorily defined indicators.

Report-Only Indicators are reported on annual campus-, district-, and state- level reports. They may be identified by statute, identified by the commissioner, or adopted by the State Board of Education.

The AEIS is used for all aspects of the integrated accountability system that has evolved for Texas public schools. In addition to being used to determine accountability ratings, AEIS is used to determine additional acknowledgments and campus-level performance awards, and to produce a variety of reports.

Comparisons to the 1996 System

In 1997, there are a number of changes being implemented: increased TAAS indicator standards, a major redesign of the Additional Indicator Acknowledgments, and slight modifications to the methodology for calculating Comparable Improvement. What has changed and what has remained stable since last year is itemized in this section. See Section III, *1997 Accountability Rating Criteria and Standards*; Section IV, *Acknowledgments and Recognitions*; and Section VIII, *1997 Campus Comparable Improvement of the Manual* for specifics on standards and criteria.

Ratings

Changes from 1996

Changes for 1997 *ratings* from the prior year include:

For a rating of *Recognized*, at least **75.0** percent of all students and each student group (African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged) must have passed each section of the TAAS.

For a rating of *Academically Acceptable* or *Acceptable*:

- ➊ At least **35.0** percent of all students and each student group (African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged) must have passed each section of the TAAS; and
- ➋ The circumstances under which the Single Student Group Dropout Waiver will be applied have been modified.

The appeals process has been restricted. (See Section X, *Local Responsibilities*.)

Additional system safeguards are being developed to assure the integrity of the accountability system. In particular, additional analysis of dropout data will be incorporated. **Large percentages of withdrawals as compared to enrollment may identify a school for data inquiry before ratings are issued.**

The methodology for Special Analysis has evolved to better incorporate a school or district's performance history. See Section V, *Special Issues and Exceptions*, for these criteria.

The dropout recovery process has been modified to accommodate new dropout reason codes reported through PEIMS.

Accountability ratings for alternative education schools choosing Optional Evaluation will be released on September 1.

Schools chartered by the State Board of Education and serving students as of October 25, 1996, will receive accountability ratings.

Additional Indicators

Changes for 1997 *Additional Acknowledgments* from the prior year include:

One additional indicator, TAAS / TASP equivalency, has been added.

Standards for a single level of acknowledgment have been set; there will no longer be a distinction between *Exemplary* and *Recognized* levels. In 1997 and beyond, a school or district can be *Acknowledged* for one or more of the additional indicators. (See Table 3 in Section IV, *Acknowledgments and Recognitions*.)

For the college admissions tests indicator, the criterion score for the SAT I has been revised to reflect the recentering of the test.

For the college admissions tests indicator, the percentage meeting or exceeding the criterion score will be based on the number of examinees, not the number of graduates, as was done in the past.

Comparable Improvement

Changes for 1997 *Comparable Improvement* from the prior year include:

The students for whom growth is evaluated for Comparable Improvement have been limited to those scoring less than a TLI of 85 in the prior year on either mathematics or reading.

The Comparable Improvement Report will include additional information about high performance and performance growth.

Reporting

Changes for 1997 *AEIS reports* from the prior year include:

1997 Spanish TAAS results for grades 3 and 4 in reading and mathematics will be reported.

In addition to the TAAS results used to determine 1997 accountability ratings, 1997 TAAS passing rates for each subject (summed for grades 3-8, and 10) will be reported for *all students tested who meet the accountability subset criteria*. These results will include non-special education students, special education students, and students tested on Spanish TAAS.

What Remains Stable in 1997

In spite of these changes, much of the Texas Public School Accountability System remains stable. After impact analysis and focus group advice, the following aspects of the system still apply in 1997:

The individual student groups are unchanged. They are: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged.

TAAS results used for accountability purposes will be based on the October subset of students, those non-special education students tested who were enrolled in the district as of October 25, 1996.

The attendance rate standard of 94.0 percent is invoked only for total students in grades 1-12.

The criteria for small numbers exclusions for base indicators are unchanged. See Section V, *Special Issues and Exceptions*, for these criteria.

Performance of students attributed to identified privately operated residential treatment facilities does not affect district accreditation status.

Performance of students attributed to the fiscal agent of an alternative education shared services arrangement does not affect district accreditation status.

The calendar for issuing ratings and reports is unchanged.

The content of the School Report Card will be unchanged.

Manual Organization

The organization of this edition of the *Accountability Manual* has been updated to reflect the changes in the 1997 accountability system. Because special issues now affect Additional Acknowledgment as well as ratings, information on the other elements of the accountability system has been organized into smaller sections. In addition, Comparable Improvement information, last year published as a separate manual, has been incorporated into this document.